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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Files

DATE: November 19, 1976

FROM : Maurice Rosenberg

SUBJECT: Letelier Investigation

Gene Propper returned my phone call at 10:30 a.m. and briefed me on developments in this investigation.

1. The trip to Venezuela:

Yesterday the State Department responded with negative news. Because the people to be interrogated are under indictment and because of internal Venezuelan political tensions about the problem of the Cubana bombing, etc., it will not be possible to speak to Bosch and the others except on terms that Propper cannot agree to. The terms required are that the FBI and U.S. authorities agree to deny, as the Venezuelan government will, that the persons to be interrogated were spirited out of prison in the dead of night and questioned -- the moduss that is proposed. Propper says that he cannot of course agree to any such terms.

With respect to the request to speak to the Venezuelan police authorities, that seems more hopeful and Propper is continuing to explore it. The "police" include both the local authorities and DISIP, including Posada.

2. Another "source of grief" for the investigation, Propper said, is that Ricardo Morales has disappeared. He is the one who threw the three American newspaper people out of Venezuela in a public hubbub at the Caracas airport. He has been an FBI [redacted] informant and wanted to speak to an American agent but that has been rendered impossible by reason of his disappearance. Propper believes the authorities wanted to get rid of him because he was an embarrassment to them in consequence of his involvement in the escapade involving the reporters and their being ejected from Venezuela. EO25x1

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3. On the home front, there is one lead that may pan out. An individual connected with DINA came into the United States for the purpose of doing the deed, so it is rumored. There are various persons who say they saw him or know him -- three people in all. One of them is an unlikely witness. The other two are a South American individual who reports the suspect was a DINA agent and that he came here for the purpose alleged. Also someone in New York City is said to have seen him and known what he was about. Propper is trying to get a photograph but doubts there is one in this country of the man. They are trying to locate a photo through other means, reaching back to Venezuela.

4. As to the bomb investigation: there is nothing conclusive to report. The investigators have run into a succession of dead ends. Propper is pessimistic about their coming up with more on whether it was a chemical explosive rather than dynamite. He does not know what the detonation mechanism was. Nothing leads them to believe it was done by remote control. Perhaps a heat sensor in the engine detonated the device.

Propper is in touch with the Agency, which knows more about sophisticated developments in bomb devices than the Bureau.

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